

Independent Claim 5 is to a dial module that includes a sheet-shaped dial having a design part on a front surface of the dial, and a sheet-shaped light source fixed to a back surface of the dial for illuminating the design part. The sheet-shaped light source is provided with a flexible printed circuit printed directly on a back surface of the sheet-shaped light source.

Independent Claim 7 is to a dial module that has a sheet-shaped light source, wherein a dial having a design part is printed directly on a front surface of the sheet-shaped light source while a flexible printed circuit is printed directly on a back surface of the sheet-shaped light source.

In the Office Action, Claims 3-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Salmon et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,406,303); Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Salmon et al. in view of Garay (U.S. Patent No. 6,183,099); and Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Salmon et al. in view of Kumazawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,333,697).

The Office Action alleges that Salmon et al. teaches a dial module comprising a sheet-shaped dial (30 and 28) with a design part (46, 48, 50 and 52) formed directly on the front face, sheet-shaped light source (26) fixed to the back surface of the dial for illuminating the design part, a flexible printed circuit board (24) fixed directly on the back surface of the light source, a terminal part (138) for attaching an additional component thereto (motors 22), and the dial light source and circuit board are substantially the same shape, but does not explicitly teach printing the dial on the front surface of the light source and the printed circuit board on the back.

The Office Action further alleges that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to print the dial on the front surface of the light source and print the circuit board on the back surface of the light source in order to reduce the number of parts required for assembly. The Office Action further mentions that since it has been held by the courts that patentability of a product does not depend on its method of production if the product in the product-by-process claim is disclosed, or suggested, by the prior art, the claim is unpatentable even though the prior product was made by a different process.

In view of the rejections, it appears as though the Office Action is alleging that the presently claimed module is not distinct from the module of Salmon et al., even though the presently claimed module has the dial and printed circuit printed directly on the front and back surfaces, respectively, of the sheet-shaped light source in Claim 7, has the dial printed directly on the front surface of the sheet-shaped light source in Claim 3, and has the printed circuit printed directly on the back surface of the sheet-shaped light source, in Claim 5.

It is respectfully submitted that in the module of Salmon et al., there are three separate material layers, one each for the light source, the dial, and the printed circuit, as shown in FIG. 6, for example. In the present invention there is only one material layer, that is the sheet-shaped light source onto which the dial and printed circuit are printed in the module of Claim 7, and there are only two material layers in the modules of Claims 3 and 5.

Salmon et al. does not disclose or suggest printing the dial or printed circuit directly on the front and back surfaces of the material of the light source. Salmon et al. only discloses the module

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having the three separate material layers. It is respectfully submitted that the present claimed invention is patentably distinct from the cited references. In view of the above remarks, reconsideration and removal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

In view of the above remarks, it is believed that Claims 3-9 and 15 are patentable and allowable, which action, at an early date is requested.

It is believed that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated **April 3, 2008**.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

KRATZ, QUINTOS & HANSON, LLP


William G. Kratz, Jr.

Attorney for Applicant

Reg. No. 22,631

WGK/JNB/ak

Atty. Docket No. **050173**
Suite 400
1420 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 659-2930



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